NOVA SCOTIA Government of Nova Scotia

Teachers Keep Learning All Summer Long

Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)
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While thousands of Nova Scotia students enjoy some time off this summer, many of their teachers are hard at work learning lessons of their own.

Hundreds of teachers, principals and vice-principals are spending part of the summer in the classroom preparing for the 1998-99 school year. Teachers have enrolled in more than 100 courses covering such topics as preparation for Internet publishing, guidance counselling, multicultural education, drama, and entrepreneurship.

Minister of Education and Culture Robbie Harrison, said the high number of Nova Scotian teachers who sign up for these courses each summer demonstrates their dedication to providing a quality classroom experience for their students.

"Teachers never stop thinking about their students," said Mr. Harrison. "They're lifelong learners, always interested in bringing new ideas and teaching methods to the classroom.

"Our goal is to provide leadership, working with schools to help teachers reach out in new directions, as they provide high quality education for our children."

Teachers volunteer their time and pay their own fees for the courses and workshops. These "summer institutes" give teachers an opportunity to become familiar with new curricula and learn new teaching methods in a wide variety of subjects. Courses reflect the realistic concerns, learning needs and areas of interest for teachers dedicated to excellence in their chosen field. In one instance this summer, 70 Annapolis Valley teachers signed up for an institute called Learning and Teaching in Grades Primary-1.

Summer institutes and courses are sponsored by the Department of Education and Culture, the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium, the Nova Scotia School Boards Association, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and a number of universities across the province. All of these institutions and organizations are committed to helping teachers continue to develop professional skills.

The Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium provides continuing education for school administrators. Principals, vice-principals and senior-level administrators are the people who set the leadership standards in schools. Their educational philosophies, values and goals filter down, influencing every teacher and student. At a time when early retirements and restructuring are bringing new principals and vice-principals to many schools across the province, the consortium's training courses are especially important. The School-Based Administrators Program is university accredited, providing credits toward

graduate degrees. For the first time this summer, the consortium is offering the program in French, at the Canadian Coast Guard College in Sydney.

A number of summer institutes remain on the schedule for August, including geometry, making video, Oceans 11, and meeting students' special needs.

The summer wraps up with Picture It! Visual Arts in the Classroom, offered at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax.

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Contact: Steve Bone
Education and Culture
902-424-3999
E-mail: bonesp@gov.ns.ca

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